

Akhlat Kalessi, or the castle of Akhlat, stands on the sea-shore, on which side it has no defences. It is a fortress with massive walls, with round and square towers at intervals, and measures about 700 paces from the water to the crest of the slope, and about 330 across. The enclosure, which is entered by two gates, contains two ancient mosques solidly built, and a few houses among fruit trees, as well as some ruins of buildings. The view of the Sipan Dagħ from this very striking ruin is magnificent.

There are many Circassian villages on the skirts of the Sipan Dagħ, and their inhabitants bear nearly as bad a reputation as that of the Kurds. They are well armed, and defy the local government. They are robbers and pilferers, and though they receive, or did receive, an allowance raised by a tax on the general community, they wring what they please out of the people among whom they live.

A mile from Akhlat, on a table-land of smooth green sward high above the silver sea, facing southwards, with a glorious view of the mountains of Central Kurdistan whitened with the first snows of winter, lies in an indescribable loneliness—the city of the dead. The sward is covered though not crowded with red sandstone monoliths, from six to fourteen feet in height, generally in excellent preservation. Each has a projecting cornice on the east side with carved niches, and the western face is covered with exquisite tracery in arabesques and knot-work, and inscriptions in early Arabic. On the graves

are either
three carved stones arranged on edge, or a
single heavy
hewn stone with a rounded top, and sides
decorated with
arabesques. Few of these beautiful monoliths
have fallen,
but some are much time-worn, and have a
growth of
vivid red or green lichen upon them.

Besides these there are some lofty *turbehs*
or mauso-
leums, admirably preserved and of extreme
beauty. The